been regularly releasing funds to the State of Assam under the Village Health Guide scheme.

(c) The Centre Government has advised the State of Assam to ensure the regular payments to Village Health Guides who are on roll.

(d) There is no such proposal at present to revise the rate of payment to the Community Health Guides.

Functioning of AICTE

2225. SHRI NARAYAN ATHAWALAY : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Fresh Rules for approval of new Technical Institutes likely" appearing in the 'Times of India' dated January 30, 1997;

(b) if so, the facts thereof and the action taken to restructure\reorient the functioning of AICTE;

(c) the details of the proposals pending clearance with AICTE; and

(d) the action plan formulated for its effective\efficient and transparent functioning?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MUHI RAM SAIKIA): (a) to (d) Approval of Technical institutions and programmes by All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) is a continuous process. At the moment 354 proposals are with the Council. Certain modifications in the procedure, time schedule and methodology in the existing regulations have been worked out which will take effect after their notification in the official Gazette.

Iodine Deficiency

2226. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item published in the 'Observer of Business and Politics' dated October 22, 1996 under the heading 'Iodine deficiency';

(b) if so, the facts thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SALEEM IQBAL SHERVANI) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Government are seized of the problem of Iodine Deficiency Disorders (IDD) and are already implementing Nation Iodine Deficiency Disorders Control Programme. The main components of the Programme are :

a. Universal iodisation of salt;
b. Establishment of IDD Control Cell in State and Union Territories;
c. Publicity and Health Education;
d. Conducting of IDD Surveys\re-surveys;
e. Establishment of IDD Monitoring Laboratory; and
f. Monitoring the quality of iodised salt.

Sale of edible non-iodised salt has also been completely babbed in all States\Union Territories except in Kerala, Goa and Union Territory of Pondicherry and partially in Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra.

Development of Ports by Private Sector

2227. SHRI PRADIP BHATTACHARYA : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) the names of the ports that have been developed or being operated by private companies in the country along with the names of such firms\companies etc.;

(b) whether some such private port operators are unable to pay-off usual charges either to the Government of the concerned port trust;

(c) whether the Government have not made any infrastructural support policy to enable these operators of private ports to survive in the trade; and

(d) if so, the facts and details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN) : (a) to (d) Private ports are being developed by maritime State Governments. The Central Government has not developed any private port.

Funds to Universities in Orissa

2228. SHRI BHAKTA CHARAN DAS : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) the grant-in-aid provided by University Grants Commission to the universities in Orissa during 1994-95, 1995-96 and 1996-97;

(b) whether such grant has not been utilized fully by the universities;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor indicating the unutilized amount remaining with the universities; and

(d) the amount allocated to each university of the State for the period 1997-98?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MUHI RAM SAIKIA): (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.